

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 EURE-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-01

INR-07 L-02 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-02

SS-15 USIA-06 AID-05 EB-07 CIEP-01 TRSE-00 STR-01

OMB-01 CEA-01 COME-00 FRB-01 XMB-02 OPIC-03 LAB-04

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FM AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 244

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AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

USMISSION EC BRUSSELS

USMISSION NATO

AMEMBASSY DUBLIN

AMEMBASSY HELSINKI

CNDOTTBUXEMBOURG 793

AMEMBASSY OSLO

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY REYKJAVIK

AMEMBASSY ROME

AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM

AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

C O N F I D E N T I A L COPENHAGEN 0056

E.O. 11652 GDS

TAGS: PINT DA

SUBJECT: GENERAL ELECTION - NO 10- ISSUES

REF: COPENHAGEN 0049

SUMMARY. THE OVERRIDING ALMOST EXCLUSVIE ISSUE OF THE
CURRENT CAMPAIGN HAS BEEN THE ECONOMIC CRISIS AND THE
RESULTANT UNEMPLOYMENT. DENMARK'S MEMBERSHIP IN THE
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COMMON MARKET HAS BEEN A MINOR ISSUE, BUT

ECONOMIC DEMOCRACY HAS COME TO THE FORE IN THE LAST DAYS OF THE CAMPAIGN. END SUMMARY.

1. PRIME MINISTER POUL HARTLING HAS SUCCEEDED IN HIS DESIRE TO MAKE THE ECONOMIC CRISIS AND THE RESULTANT UNEMPLOYMENT(CURRENTLY OVER 6 PERCENT) THE PRIMARY ISSUE IN THE CAMPAIGN. THE LIBERAL GOVERNMENT'S "CRISIS PLAN '75" HOWEVER, HAS NOT HELD THE STAGE AS "THE ONLY WORKABLE PLAN". IT HAS BEEN CHALLENGED BY SIMILAR PLANS FROM ALL OF THE MAJOR OLD-LINE PARTIES, EACH MORE COMPLICATED AND LESS INTELLIGIBLE TO THE AVERAGE VOTER THAN THE LAST. THIS ALMOST TOTAL CONCENTRATION ON THE "DISMAL SCIENCE", HAS UNDOUBTEDLY CONTRIBUTED TO THE LACKADAISICAL, HALF-HEARTED WAY IN WHICH THE CAMPAIGN HAS BEEN CONDUCTED.

2. OUT OF THE WELTER OF CONFLICTING ECONOMIC PANACEAS, HOWEVER, THE OPPOSITION PARTIES HAVE MANAGED TO CONVEY THE IMPRESSION CONTRARY TO HARTLING'S EVERY EFFORT THAT THERE IS A BASIC DIFFERENCE IN THE VARIOUS PLANS. GERT PETERSEN, CHAIRMAN OF THE SOCIALIST PEOPLES PARTY, PROBABLY BEST EXPRESSED THIS IN A STATEMENT THAT THE ELECTION WAS A CHOICE BETWEEN A SOCIALIST AND A LIBERAL SOLUTION TO THE ECONOMIC CRISIS.

3. IN THE ABSENCE OF SOLID ISSUES THE CAMPAIGN HAS TURNED TO PERSONALITIES (HARTLING, HORGENSEN, BAUNSGAARD AND GLISTRUP) AND TO THE USUAL PREOCCUPATION WITH CONCEIVABLE GOVERNMENTAL COALITIONS. IN THE LATTER CONNECTION, RADICAL LEADER HILMAR BAUNSGAARD HAS COME THROUGH STRONGLY IN THE LAST DAYS OF THE CAMPAIGN WITH HIS CALL FOR A MAJORITY GOVERNMENT AT ALL COSTS. "DENMARK HAS HAD TWO MINORITY GOVERNMENTS IN THE PAST TWO YEARS WHICH FAILED TO SOLVE OUR ECONOMIC PROBLEM. DENMARK CANNOT AFFORD A THIRD FAILURE". (BAUNSGAARD OF COURSE KNOWS THAT THE MOST PROBABLY MAJORITY GOVERNMENT WOULD BE A THREE-WAY COALITION: THE TWO LARGEST PARTIES, THE LIBERALS AND SOCIAL DEMOCRATS WITH THE RADICALS FORMING A BRIDGE BETWEEN THEM, A GOVERNMENT WHICH MIGHT MAKE HIM PRIME MINISTER.)

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4. THE COMMON MARKET. HAS BEEN A MINOR ISSUE PRIMARILY BECAUSE HARTLING'S CRISIS PLAN REQUIRED EC COMMISSION AUTHORIZATION OF THE PROPOSED FREEZE ON AGRICULTURAL PRICES. THIS HAS PROVIDED THE ANTI-EC FORCES, WHO HAVE BEEN SURPRISINGLY PASSIVE, A HANDLE TO USE IN THEIR EFFORT TO MAKE THAT ISSUE MORE CENTRAL IN THE CAMPAIGN. IN THE CONCLUDING TELEVISION DEBATE AMONG THE PARTY CHAIRMEN JAN 7, ANKER JORGENSEN STATED FLATLY THAT IF THE UK DOES

WITHDRAW, THE SOCIAL DEMOCRATS WOULD FAVOR A NEW
REFERENDUM ON CONTINUED DANISH MEMBERSHIP.

5. ECONOMIC DEMOCRACY (ED) HAS EMERGED IN THE FINAL WEEK
OF THE CAMPAIGN AS A SIGNIFICANT ISSUE. THE GOVERNMENTS
REPEATED REJECTION OF ECONOMIC DEMOCRACY AS PART OF ITS
CRISIS PLAN HAS TENDED TO EMPHASIZE THAT IT IS THE
CHARACTERISTIC FEATURE OF THE "SOCIALIST" CRISIS PLAN,
DESPITE THE EFFORTS BY THE SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC PARTY LEADERS
TO MINIMIZE IT AS AN ISSUE DURING THE CAMPAIGN. DANISH
TRADE UNION FEDERATION(LO) CHAIRMAN THOMAS
NIELSEN IN A STATEMENT JAN 6 SOFTENED THE HITHERTO
ADAMANT SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC OPPOSITION TO ANY FORM OF
COMPROMISE ON ED. THIS STATEMENT WAS SEIZED BY BAUNSGAARD
IN THE CONCLUDING TV DEBATE AS THE BASIS FOR A QUESTION
TO HARTLING WHETHER THE LIBERALS WOULD SHOW A CORRESPONDING
WILLINGNESS TO NEGOTIATE ON ED. THE POSSIBILITY HAS AT
LEAST BEEN FLOATED THAT A COMPROMISE ON ED (PERHAPS THE
FORMATION OF AN ED COMMISSION TO DEVISE A WORKABLE FORM,
TOGETHER WITH A COMMITMENT TO ITS EVENTUAL IMPLEMENTATION)
COULD FORM THE BASIS FOR A LIBERAL-RADICAL-SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC
COALITION OR INFORMAL ALLIANCE. THIS WOULD PROBABLY BECOME
A POSSIBILITY ONLY IF HARTLING IS UNABLE TO FIND ANY
OTHER FEASIBLE GOVERNMENTAL BASE.
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